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Public library role for the development of socio economic conditions of Lodha Community in Senna and Chandana mouza, Keshiary block, Paschim Medinipur

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**Public library role for the development of socio economic conditions of
Lodha Community in Senna and Chandana mouza, Keshiary block,
Paschim Medinipur**

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Abstract:

Public libraries play an important role in promoting rural community development of rural areas. Information needs of rural public library users (especially backward community people with lower income group) are different from other public library users. To study their need, a survey has been conducted on Lodha community in Senna and Chandana Mouza at Keshiary block of Paschim Medinipur. A structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from different economically backward public library users. The aim of our study is to know the basic community information needs and information seeking pattern of public library users of Keshiary block, Paschim Medinipur. Some case studies also have been incorporated to analysis their need. The study has clearly shown that, it is necessary to make public library in every rural village and make the economically backward people aware about the need and importance of the rural public library. So, state government should take steps for the proper growth, recruitment, and development of rural public libraries located in the remote areas of West Bengal.

Keywords: Public Library, Socio economic condition, Lodha community, Information need, Backward community, Community development, Senna and Chandana Mouza, PaschimMedinipur, Keshiary block.

Introduction:

Public libraries are an important entity in local communities in any state or district and particularly can play a significant role in a community's economic and social development. Information dissemination through public library is an essential factor for the development of the community. According to 2011 census, the total population of West Bengal is 91,276,115 of this 52,96,953 persons are Scheduled Tribes constituting 5.8% of the total population of the state. Total population of Lodha community is 108,707 among which 54,692 are males and 54,015 are females of the state.(Statistical Profile, 2013) According to census report 2011, the total population of Paschim Medinipur district is 59,13,457 of this 880015 persons are Scheduled Tribes constituting 14.88% of the total population of the district (District Census Handbook, 2011) and total Lodha population of Paschim Medinipur is 60,136 (approx.) (Employment & Backward Class Welfare, Paschim Medinipur Zilla Parishad, 2017).

Objective of the study:

- The aim of our study is to identify socio economic conditions of Lodha community in Senna and Chandana Mouza at keshiary Block, Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.
- To recommend some suggestions for their better improvement, this demonstrates the way to socio economic development of Lodha community.

Scope and Coverage:

- The scope of the study is to analyse the socio-economic conditions of the people belonging to one of the backward communities i.e. the Lodha community.
- The study has been carried out in the Senna village and Chandana village of Keshiary block in the district of Paschim Medinipur, West Bengal.
- The two villages have been selected as there is a considerable population of Lodhas in these two areas which is very much required for this type of study.
- As the population is not that high so therefore the whole population is studied to get a clear and definite picture of the whole community in that area, except for the variable subsistence status where only the adult population is studied.

Literature review:

- Risley (1981) presented a detailed account of internal structure, marriage, religion, funeral, social status etc. of various communities.
- Das (1991) presented a comparison of traditional and modern occupations of a few tribal communities. He also showed the various occupations taken by different tribal

communities and nature of occupations. Different welfare measures were also discussed in this article.

- Chakrabarti (1999) discussed about the information need of the Toto community who are basically non-users of the formal information system. It revealed the information needs of the villagers with their traditional information needs.
- Bandyopadhyay (2008) discussed about the preservation of the traditional knowledge and culture of tribes that were not being preserved in written form and the role of librarians and libraries, NGOs and other institutes in this matter.
- Biswas (2008) depicted an overview on Dhimal Community of West Bengal. Author consulted different writings of eminent scholars on Dhimal Community and showed the present status of this community.
- Ghatak (2008) analysed conversion processes from Lodha to Savara and also from Savara to Lodha. These processes are mainly caused by the government development programmes which sometimes lead to identity crises. Against this backdrop, the Lodha and Savara, tribal people of West Bengal are now seeking to maintain their own identities.
- Banik (2009) presented a nutritional status of adults of three endogamous populations – Dhimals, Mech and Rajbanshi of Darjeeling in West Bengal. This study discussed about a preliminary record of information of anthropometric appraisal of health and nutritional status of adult section of both the sexes belonging to these three communities.
- Chakrabarti et al. (2011) explained the various social customs in their life and information needs of the villagers with their traditional information needs in Mahakalguri of Jalpaiguri District (pp. 66-101).
- Chakrabarti et al. (2011) gave a vivid picture about the different aspects of information need of Mech Community at MaaBhandani Hat in Jalpaiguri District, West Bengal. The paper highlighted the socio-economic condition of Mech Community considering all the aspects of their life. Overall, it is a clear and graphic description about the peoples belonging to the Mech Community (pp. 63-112).

Methodology:

The study is based on survey method. The survey work includes field visit for primary data collection. At first, the basic information is collected through the literatures available on Lodhas. A structured method like written questionnaire and unstructured method which includes observation is used for the study. In the next stage, the Lodhas are questioned using structured and unstructured questionnaire. At the last stage, the collected data has been summarized and tabulated through different tables considering different point of view. Then

the tabulated data has been analysed based on the tables. Lastly, conclusions are made based on the findings.

Background of Lodha Community:

The word Lodha might have originated from the word “Lubdhaka” meaning a trapper or flower. They adopted the appellation of Lodha or Ludhi after the name from the Lodh tree which grows in abundance in Northern India. According to the census of India 1901, they originally migrated from central provinces where an agricultural tribe named! Lodh’ or! Nodh’ or Ludhi’ is found in large numbers even today. According to 1951 census, Lodha community was occupying the Scheduled Caste status but since September 1957 the Lodhas have been declared as the Scheduled Tribe of West Bengal on the basis of their commendation of the Backward Classes Commission. They are basically a group of food gathering people and mainly subsist on the collection of wild roots, tubers and edible leaves from jungles. They also practice the killing of the wild games, like birds, lizards and alligators to consume their flesh as food and sell the skins and hides of these animals in the market. Besides West Bengal, they were also found in the Mayurbhanj and Baleswar districts of Orissa, Originally, they inhabited hilly rugged terrains covered with jungle. Their mother tongue is Lodha, which is close to Savara, an Austro-Asiatic language. They are fluent in Bengali. Traditionally, they were forest dwellers but now they have started cultivation either as owners of land or as agricultural labourers and are also engaged in hunting and fishing. They are also divided into some patrilineal exogamous clans such as Nayek, Kotal, Manik, Chorkialu, Digar, Mallick, Bhokta, Bhunia, Dandapat, etc. They have unique dance form called the Chang .

Findings and Analysis of the data:

The total population is tabulated below:

Mouza	Total	Male (%)	Female (%)
Senna	142	67 (47.18)	75(52.82)
Chandana	277	137 (49.46)	140(50.54)

Table 1: Total population of Senna and Chandana Mouza (Male and Female)

whereas total adult population is :

Mouza	Total (%)	Male (%)	Female (%)
Senna	90 (63.38)	44 (48.89)	46 (51.11)
Chandana	174 (62.82)	84 (48.28)	90 (51.72)

Table 2: Total adult population of Senna and Chandana Mouza (Male and Female)

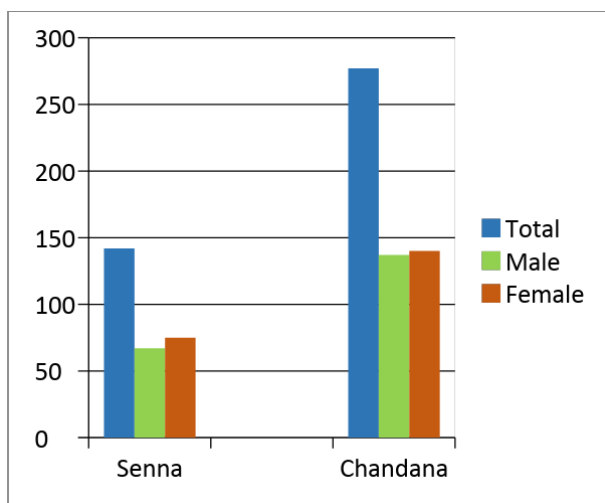


Fig 1 : Total population

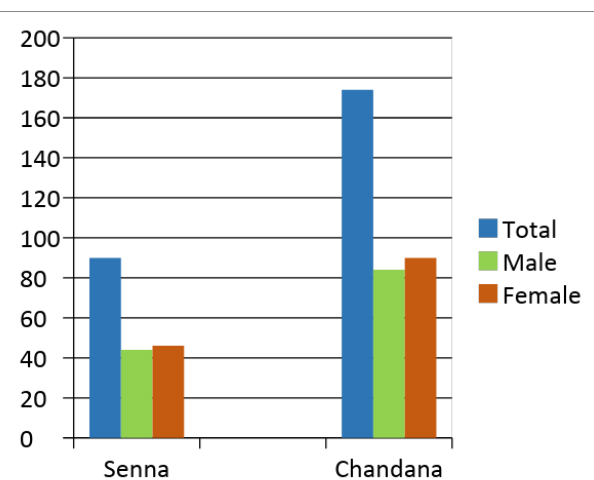


Fig 2 : Adult population

It is easily understandable that percentages of adult population of both mouzas are nearly same and female population is higher in both mouzas.

Name of the mouza	Age Group (Sex Wise)											
	18-27 (%)		28-37 (%)		38-47 (%)		48-57 (%)		58+ (%)		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Senna	11	12	10	10	6	11	8	6	9	7	44	46
Total	23 (25.56)		20 (22.22)		17 (18.89)		14 (15.56)		16 (17.78)		90	
Chandana	24	29	28	18	12	13	7	10	13	20	84	90
Total	53 (30.46)		46 (26.44)		25 (14.37)		17 (9.78)		33 (18.97)		174	

Table 3: Age sex composition of Sennaand and Chandana mouza

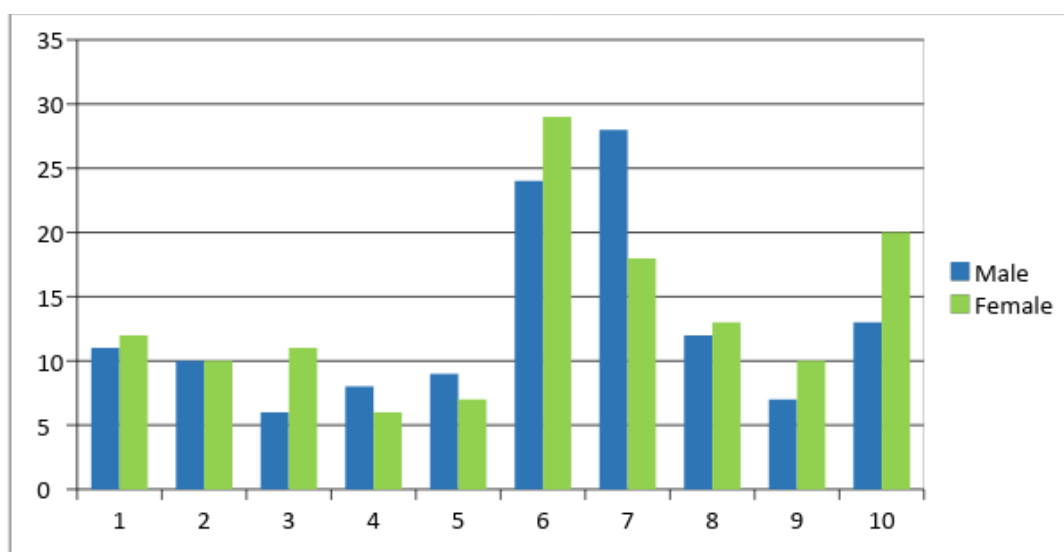


Fig 3 : Distribution of adult population according to age and sex

In comparison of age – sex wise adult population distribution it is found that in Senna most of the adult person belongs to age group 18 – 27 (25.56 %) and in this group female population is also higher than male population. The highest adult female population comes under the age group of 18 – 27 and in age group of 38 – 47 female population is higher than male.

In Chandana 30.46 % adult population comes under the age group of 18 – 27 where female population is higher than other age groups and it is also higher than male population of that particular age group. Female population is also higher than male in age group of 58+. The highest number of adult male population comes under the age group of 28 – 37.

Status	Age Group (Sex Wise)											
	18-27		28-37		38-47		48-57		58+		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Married	6	10	9	9	6	9	8	5	9	5	38	38
Unmarried	4	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	2
Divorce	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
Widower	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	4

Total	10	12	11	10	6	11	8	6	9	7	44	46
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Table 4: Age wise marital status of Sennamouza

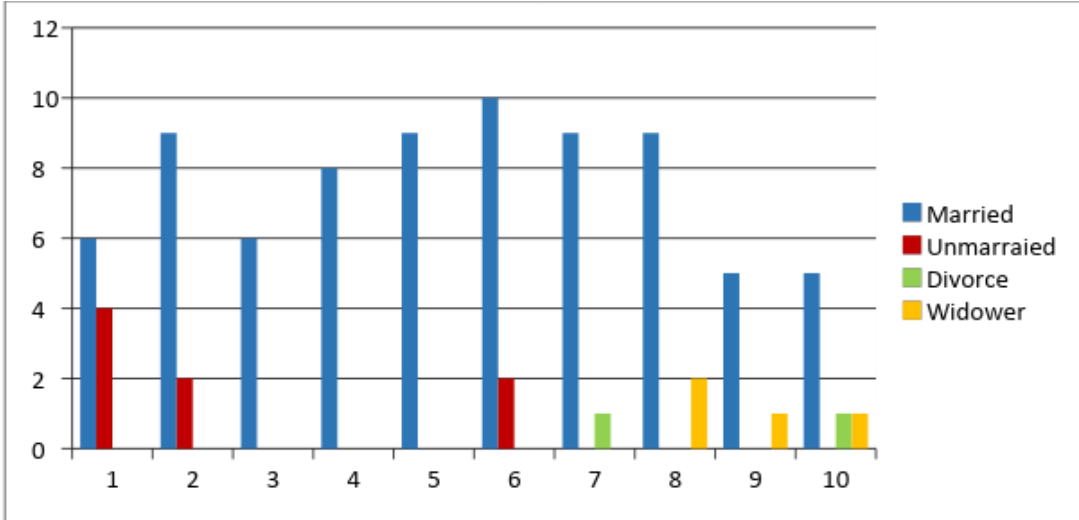


Fig 4 : Marital status of Senna mouza

Table 4 reveals about the marital status of Senna mouza. It is found that married population of male and female are same and unmarried male population is higher.

Status	Age Group (Sex Wise)											
	18-27		28-37		38-47		48-57		58+		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Married	15	27	24	18	13	10	7	8	12	7	71	70
Unmarried	9	0	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	11	2
Divorce	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2
Widower	0	0	2	0	0	2	0	2	0	12	2	16
Total	24	28	28	20	13	13	7	10	12	19	84	90

Table 5: Age wise marital status of Chandana Mouza

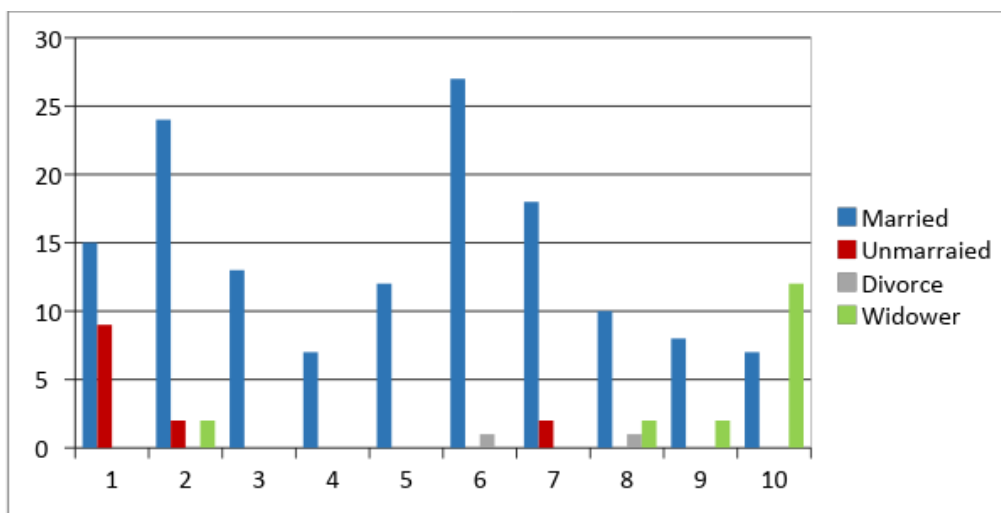


Fig 5 : Marital status of Chandana mouza

Table 5 provides the information about marital status of Chandana mouza which reveals that the married male population is higher than female and male unmarried population is also higher than female. In this mouza a large number of female widowers are found.

Type	Senna			Chandana		
	Asbestos / Tali	Hay shed	Total (%)	Asbestos / Tali	Hay shed	Total (%)
Brick house	2	0	2 (4.76)	1	0	1 (1.52)
Hut	13	0	13 (30.95)	30	7	37 (56.06)
Jhupri	0	27	27 (64.29)	0	28	28 (42.42)
Total	15	27	42	31	35	66

Table 6: House pattern of Senna and Chandana mouza

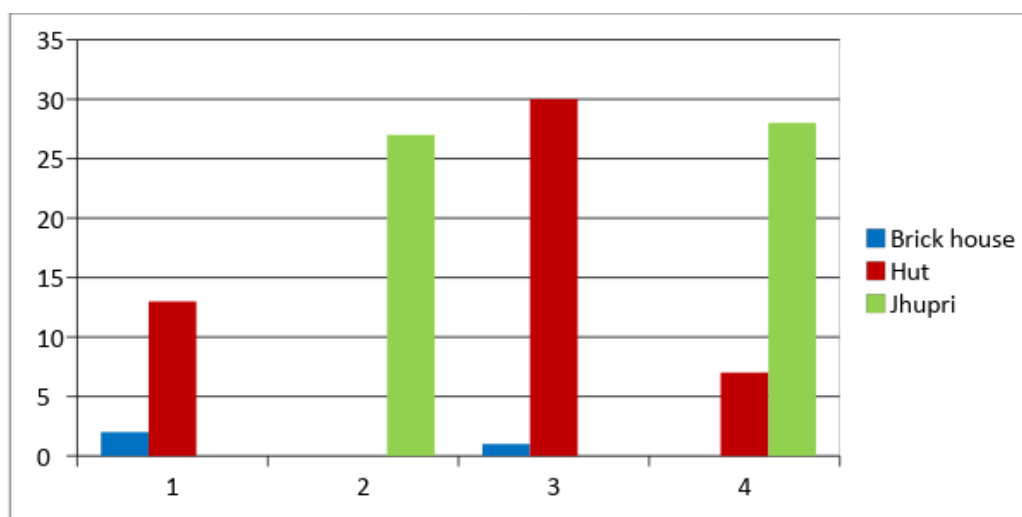


Fig 6 : House pattern

The table 6 highlights that 4.76 % are brick houses in Senna but in Chandana this ratio became only 1.52 %. A large number of hut houses are found in Chandana where as the percentage of jhupri is higher in Senna than Chandana.

Therefore it is easily assumed that between the said two mouzas the socio – economic condition of Senna is not well developed than Chandana because in Senna 64.29 % house type is jhupri where in Chandana 56.06 % is hut.

Number of members	Senna	Chandana
	Number of families (%)	Number of families (%)
1 – 2	14 (33.33)	16 (24.24)
3 – 4	15 (35.71)	22 (33.33)
5 – 6	12 (28.57)	22 (33.33)
7+	1 (2.38)	6 (9.09)
Total	42	66

Table 7: Household size of Senna and Chandana Mouza

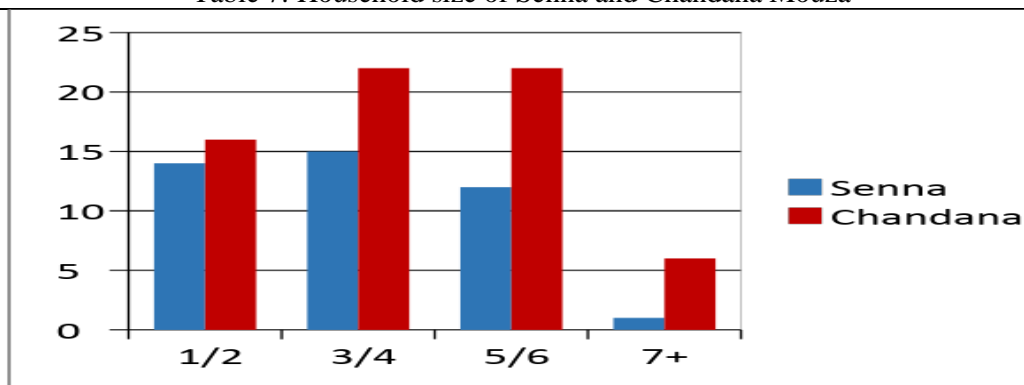


Fig 7: Household size of Senna and Chandana Mouza

Table 7 represents the information about household size in Senna and Chandana. In Senna 33.33 % families have one or two members, 35.71% families have three or four members, 28.57 % families have five or six members and only 2.38 % families have seven or more than seven members.

In Chandana 33.33% families have in between three to six members, 24.24 % families have one or two members and 9.09 % families have seven or more than seven members.

It is identified that number of big families having seven or more than seven members are much higher in Chandana than Senna. In Senna the most of the families have three or four members.

Level of education	Age Group (Sex Wise)											
	18-27		28-37		38-47		48-57		58+		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Can Sign	1	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	3	2
I-IV	2	1	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	4	1
V-VIII	1	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4	3
IX-XII	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Total literate	5	5	5	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	12	7
	10 (11.11)		7 (7.78)		1 (1.11)		1 (1.11)		0		19 (21.11)	
Total illiterate	6	7	5	7	6	12	7	6	8	7	32	39
	13 (14.44)		12 (13.33)		18 (20.00)		13 (14.44)		15 (16.67)		71 (78.89)	

Table 8: Educational status of Senna Mouza

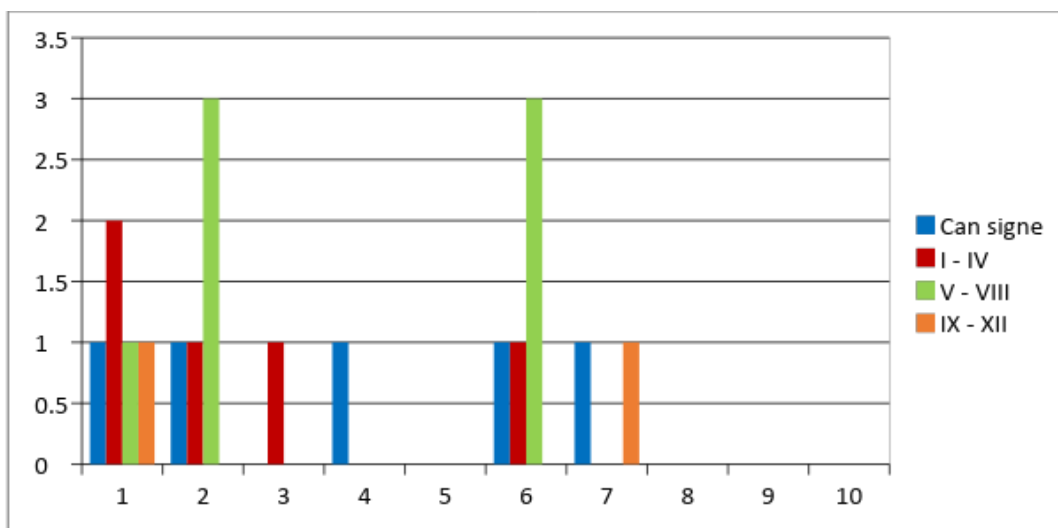


Fig 8: Educational status

Level of education	Age Group (Sex Wise)											
	18-27		28-37		38-47		48-57		58+		Total	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Can Sign	3	4	6	3	4	4	2	1	2	0	17	12
I-IV	4	2	2	1	1	1	0	0	1	0	8	4
V-VIII	11	8	6	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	18	8
IX-XII	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Total literate	19	14	15	4	7	5	2	1	3	0	46	24
	33 (18.97)		19 (10.92)		12 (6.90)		3 (1.72)		3 (1.72)		70(40.23)	
Total illiterate	4	16	14	14	5	8	5	9	10	19	38	66
	20 (11.49)		28 (16.09)		13 (7.47)		14 (8.05)		29 (16.67)		104 (59.77)	

Table 9: Educational status of Chandana Mouza

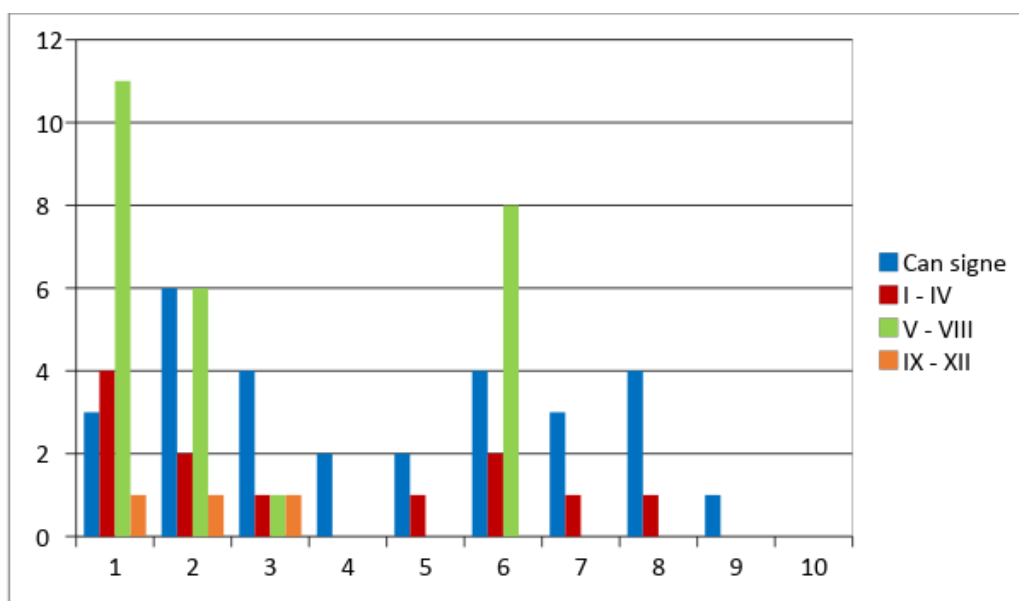


Fig 9 : Educational status

Mouza	Sex	Total adult	Literate	Illiterate
Senna	Male	44	12 (27.27)	32 (72.73)
	Female	46	7 (15.22)	39 (84.78)
Chandana	Male	84	46 (54.76)	38 (45.24)
	Female	90	24 (26.67)	66 (73.33)
Table 10: Literate and Illiterate status of Senna and Chandana mouza				

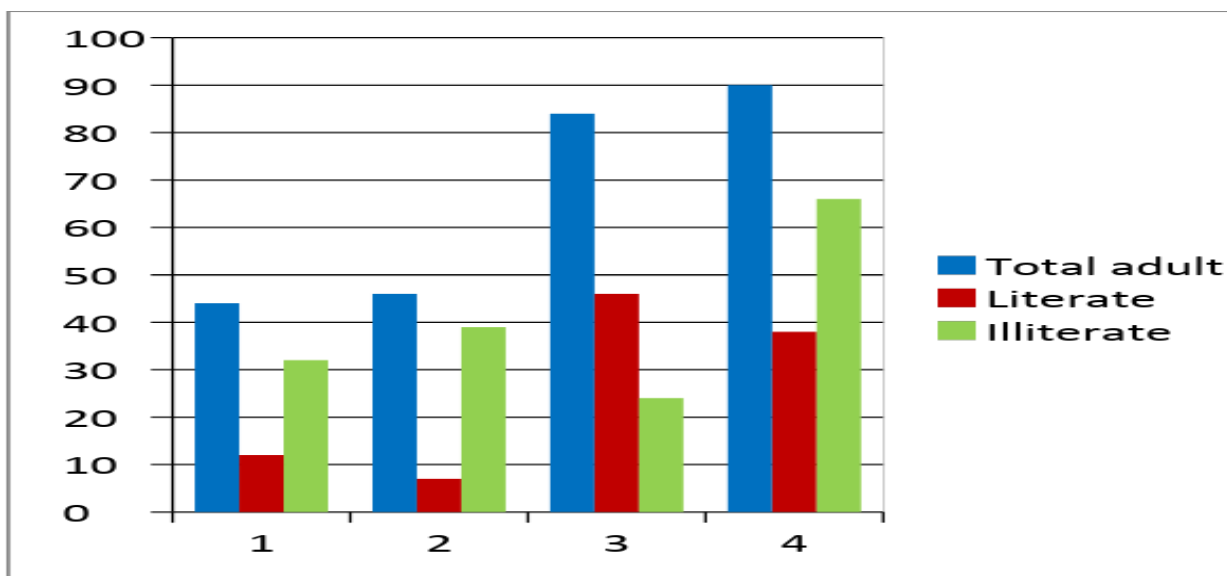


Fig 10 : Literate and Illiterate status

Table 8, 9 and 10 represent the educational status of adult population of Senna and Chandana mouza. In comparison to both mouza it is identified that education rate is much higher in Chandana than Senna. In Senna male literacy rate is higher than female. It is also identified that highest educated person belongs to 18 to 27 age group in both mouzas. But in Chandana the male education rate of this particular age group is higher than female rate.

In Senna only 1.11 % educated male population are found who comes under the age group of 38 to 57 and only two male candidate taken their education up to class 12. No educated person are found in the age group of 58 and above

In Chandana three people taken their education up to class 12 and they are male candidate. It is also found that three educated male candidates are belongs to the age group of 58 and above.

Occupation ↓ Mouza →	Senna	Chandana
Agricultural day labour	58 (64.44)	110 (63.22)
Non agricultural day labour	2 (2.22)	2 (1.15)
Forest produce collection and sell	0	30 (17.24)
Hand craft	10 (11.11)	0
Old age pension holder	6 (6.67)	4 (2.30)
Widow pension holder	1 (1.11)	2 (1.15)
Total	77 (85.56)	148 (85.06)

Table 11: Educational status of Chandana Mouza

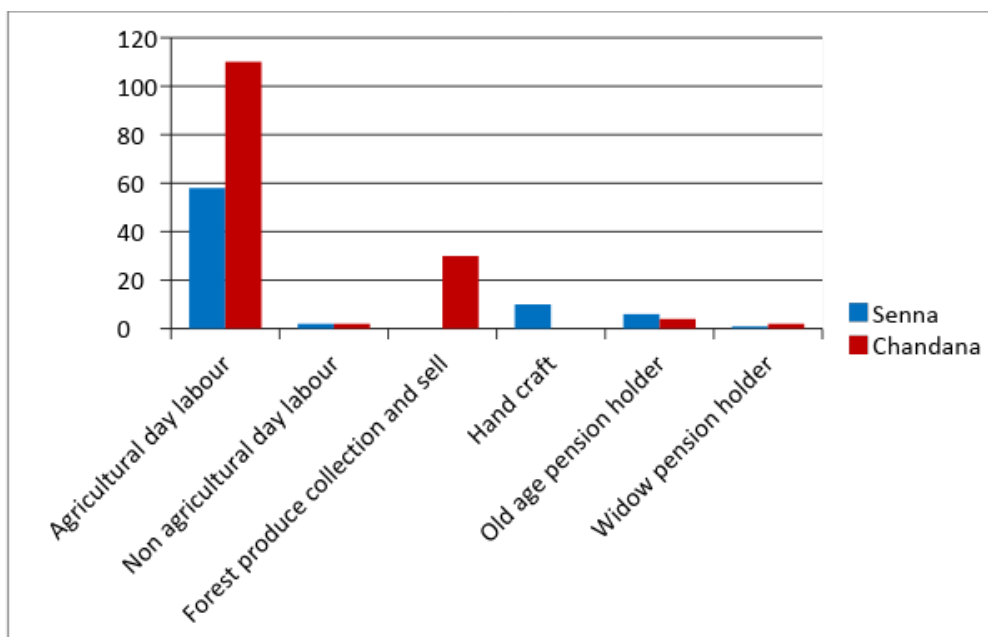


Fig 11: Occupational status

Table 11 reveals information about occupational status of both mouzas. In Senna 85.56 % people earn money from different sources among which a large number of people associated with agricultural work and the second largest income source is hand craft. Mainly they make bamboo sculptures, basket etc.

In Chandana the percentage of earning population is 85.06 and most of the people engage in agricultural work. Specially in Chandana 17.24 % people earn money from selling of forest collection goods.

It is very much clear that a large number of people belong to Lodha community of Senna and Chandana are till now engage in their traditional work that is agriculture.

Economic Asset	Senna	Chandana
House	42 (100)	66 (100)
Cycle	20 (47.62)	45 (68.18)
Bike	00	00
Tube Well	00	00
Electricity	13 (30.95)	36 (54.55)
Television	1 (2.38)	18 (27.27)
Cow/Buffalo	3 (7.14)	18 (27.27)

Bird	4 (9.52)	18 (27.27)
Goat	3 (7.14)	6 (9.09)

Table 12: Economic asset of household of Senna and Chandana mouza

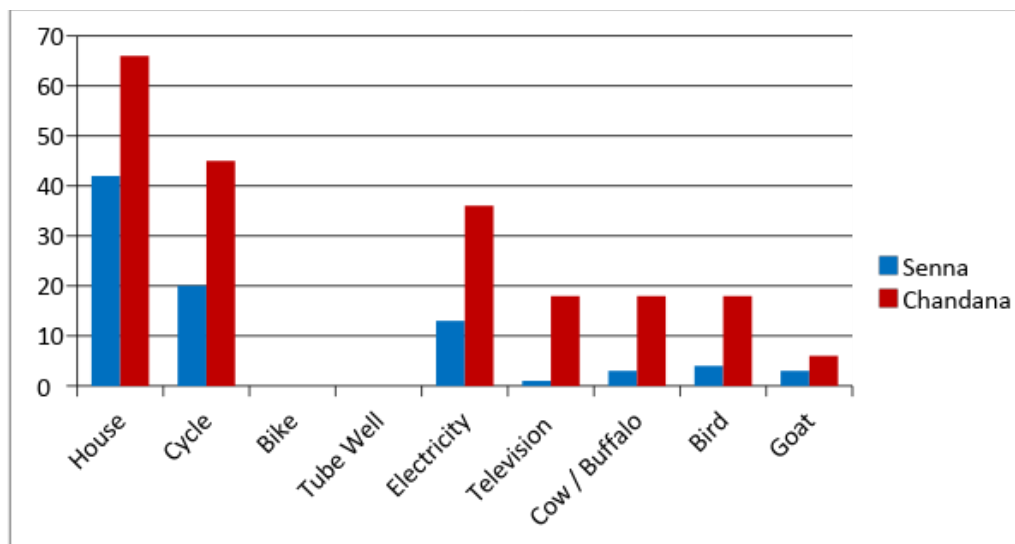


Fig 12 : Economical asset

From the table 12 it is found that the household of both mouza have nearly same economical asset. In Senna 47.62 % household have cycle and in Chandana it is 68.18 %. 54.55% household using electricity in Chandana but in Senna it is only 30.95%. A huge difference found Between Senna and Chandana in comparison to some economical asset like electricity, television, cow / buffalo and bird. It proves that the condition of Senna Lodha population is backward than Chandana.

Role of Public Library:

- i) The rural public library offers participatory opportunities to the community members within its delivery of services, and activities in ways that the local people prefer.
- ii) Rural public libraries facilitate learning and change in a rural community by facilitating the process of accessing and acquiring new knowledge, skills and values. Through these opportunities, individuals will later develop and share empowerment and relevant abilities within their own community.
- iii) They promote lifelong learning among adult rural community members.
- iv) To inspire members of the community to read, to use books, information and knowledge access, and to enjoy all materials in the library for education and recreation.
- v) To help a rural community understand the country's social, political and economic endeavors and nation building efforts.

Need of Community Information

Information is everywhere but information needs differ from one to another. From the above survey it is depicted that information needs for a particular community like Lodhas are like agriculture and related information, education related queries, job related news, health issues, self-employment programs, query related to animal husbandry, financial assistance programs, government programs, legal aids, social welfare programs, housing related issues, Horticulture, Local and political news etc.

Community information (CI) can be provided from public library:

The following information services can be given from the public library regarding agriculture and related information, education related notifications, job related guidelines, internet and mobile services, drinking water facility, blood donation and health camps, self-help group programs, financial assistance programs, information regarding government programs, legal aids information, social welfare programs of different NGOs, Local and political news, consumer information, environment related news etc.

Problems to provide CI for public library:

The main problem of the public library to provide community information services are:

- i) Inadequate planning and infrastructure
- ii) Lack of staff
- iii) Absence of librarian
- iv) Lack of collection of adequate information
- v) Lack of fund
- vi) Lack of mobile and internet services
- vii) Lack of toilet and water purifier facility etc.

Proposed model for public library:

Government agencies or institutions can be grouped into three main models:

- i) **Exogenous development model:** involves the use of externally provided professional leadership to plan, implement and evaluate development programs.
- ii) **Endogenous development model:** an approach whereby rural development is considered to be transferred into particular regions and externally forced on a community.

iii) Mixed development model: involves the interaction between local and external elements in the control of the development process.

This mixed development approach is said to be the best approach for community development. It allows many local elements, such as regional identity, local cultures and the natural environment, to be a part of the development effort and process (Terluin and Post, 2001). The Malaysian government has organized efforts to stimulate national development through three major orientation: output goals, namely to produce physical assistance; cultural goals, which focus on community development by increasing local participation at their own pace; and mixed output cultural goals, which involve an effort to create a new culture, to change the economic or social structure or small parts of it, and to produce some service or amenity (Isa, 2010).

Suggestions:

- i) Ensuring basic education to the entire population of the Lodha community.
- ii) Developing special health packages and extending vital health services through improved delivery system to combat endemic diseases prevalent in these Tribal areas.
- iii) Launching exclusive schemes for their survival, protection and all round development.
- iv) Expansion of employment-cum-income generation activities through National Backward Classes Finance and Development Corporation.
- v) Extending special coaching and training to the educated people in the community to prepare them for various competitive examinations.
- vi) Purchasing/paying of remunerative prices to Minor Forest Produce (MFP) collected by these Tribals to avoid exploitation by the middlemen; processing and marketing of the same by TRIFED (Tribal Cooperative Marketing Development Federation of India Ltd.) (Planning Commission of India, 2001).
- vii) Setting up libraries and information centres in the areas to deliver the right information at the right time.
- viii) State government should follow mixed development approach for the proper growth and development of rural public libraries located in the remote areas of West Bengal.

State government policies regarding the public library:

State government has implemented or rather trying to implement some policies regarding the public library. These are like

i) Digitization and computerization of public libraries: C-DAC, Kolkata (an autonomous body created by Govt. of India) is decided to computerize the public libraries in different phases to cope up with the present needs and to disseminate information to the rural peoples of West Bengal.

ii) Networking of libraries: Public libraries will be connected through internet in different phases to ensure proper networking among the public libraries of West Bengal.

iii) Establishment of Women's Libraries: Government of West Bengal is planning to introduce women library in different districts of West Bengal to increase the reading habits among women of our society and also attract them towards library. These libraries will be managed by the women professionals.

iv) Community library cum information centres: Community library cum information centers are to be established by the Gram Panchayats under initiative of the community. Accommodation is to be provided free of cost.

Conclusions:

We conclude that in a public library context, community development means building connections with people. Community development programme can be achieved through the following steps like **Participation**, building relationships with people by providing access to current resources and technology, and involve community members to participate in library related activities **Determination**, identifying information needs and contributing to the future of the community, **Decision Making**, to make right decision at the right time to help community, **Leadership** role should be taken by librarian himself. They must lead from the front and try to connect to the community.

Now if we see the conditions of the public libraries of West Bengal, the scenario is not good. Approximately 3000 public libraries do not have library workers since long time. Due to lack workers most of the public libraries were closed. Now, West Bengal government agreed to employ 183 librarians and 300 library workers on contract basis for the first phase and in the second phase they are going to recruit another 700 library workers. Although the number is very less with respect to demand. But government could realise the need of the librarian to save the public libraries of the state. So, it is a positive sign from the viewpoint of the public library. State government is taking some initiatives for the development of the public library.

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